# Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC)

**Public Meeting** 



Public Meeting Book

February 29, 2024

8:30 - 11:30 AM

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Joseph A. Ladapo, MD, PhD

State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

# Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC) Meeting

February 29, 2024 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. EST

Location: 4052 Bald Cypress Way, Conference Room 301, Tallahassee, FL 32311

Meeting details can be found at http://floridahealth.gov/DPACMeeting

# **AGENDA**

Time	Topic	Topic Facilitator / Presenter
8:30 – 8:35 a.m.	Welcome/Introductions/Opening Remarks	Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH Assistant Deputy Secretary of Health Florida Department of Health
8:35 – 8:40 a.m.	Approval of October 25, 2023, Meeting Minutes	DPAC Members
8:40 – 9:00 a.m.	Presentation on State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication (SAFE)	Vaden "Shane" Pollard Deputy Commissioner, Investigations and Forensic Science Florida Department of Law Enforcement
9:00 – 9:20 a.m.	Presentation on Florida Recovery Schools	Dan Renaud Executive Director Florida Recovery Schools
9:20 – 9:25 a.m.	Break	
9:25– 10:20 a.m.	Discussion of Roles and Responsibilities of DPAC	Jon Conley Strategic Initiatives Manager Florida Department of Health
10:20 – 11:10 a.m.	Agency and Member Updates	DPAC Members
11:10 – 11:25 a.m.	Public Comment	
11:25 – 11:30 a.m.	Next Steps Motion to Adjourn	Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH



# Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

October 25, 2023 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams: <a href="http://floridahealth.gov/DPACMeeting">http://floridahealth.gov/DPACMeeting</a> Or call in (audio only): (850) 792-1375 Phone Conference ID: 878 463 523#

#### Welcome/Introductions

Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Health with the Florida Department of Health, opened the Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council (DPAC) meeting. Ms. Jordan thanked all members of DPAC, designated appointees, and other participants for their continued partnership in this critical work. Ms. Jordan asked Shay Holloway, BSN, MBA, to proceed with the roll call.

## The following members or designees were in attendance:

Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH, State Surgeon General Designee

Joe Spataro for Ashley Moody (Office of the Attorney General)

John McClellan for Mark Glass (Department of Law Enforcement)

Jeffrey Cece, MS, CPM for Shevaun Harris (Department of Children and Families)

Maggie Agerton for Ricky Dixon (Department of Corrections)

Tracy Shelby for Eric Hall, Ed.D. (Department of Juvenile Justice)

Timothy Hay for Manny Diaz, Jr. (Department of Education)

Captain Derrick Rahming for Dave Kerner (Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles)

Captain Robert P. Bales for Major General John D. Haas (Department of Military Affairs)

Doug Simon (Governor's Office of Policy and Budget)

Sheriff Peyton Grinnell (Governor Appointee: Drug Enforcement, Lake County Sheriff's Office)

Peggy Sapp (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Prevention, Informed Families)

Melanie Brown-Woofter (Governor Appointee: Substance Abuse Treatment, Florida Behavioral Health Association)

Colonel Christopher Rule for Sheriff Chad Chronister (Governor Appointee: Expertise in Drug Enforcement and Substance Abuse Programs and Services, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office)

Sheriff Chris Nocco (Governor Appointee: Expertise in Drug Enforcement and Substance Abuse Services, Pasco Sheriff's Office)

Nicholas Carper for Representative Spencer Roach (Florida House of Representatives)

Judge Steve Leifman (11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida)

#### **Guests and Staff:**

Deborah Babin (Guest)

Amanda Bonham-Lovett (Guest)

Kimberly Boykin (Guest)

Nancy Castillo (Guest)

Betsie J. Cieslak (Florida Department of Children and Families)

Anita Cocoves (Guest)

Jon Conley (Florida Department of Health)

Maggie Dilger (Florida Department of Health)

Mike Duffey (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)

Christina During (Florida Department of Health)

Robert Eads (FLNG)

Jesseka Forbes, PharmD (Agency for Health Care Administration)

Lissa Franklin (Guest)

Aaron Gerson (11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida)

Shay Holloway, BSN, MBA (Florida Department of Health)

Nathan Hipps (Guest)

Rob Jacobson (Guest)

Jennifer Johnson (Florida Behavioral Health Association)

Maureen Kielian (SERFA)

Beth Labasky (Informed Families)

Robert Labaut (Guest)

Diane R. Leach (Emergent BioSciences)

Melissa Leslie (Florida Department of Children and Families)

Ramon Maury (Informed Families)

Heidi Matheny (Guest)

Miranda Matthews (Guest)

Shelby Meaders (Guest)

Meg Murphy (FLHRC)

Alexa Mutchler (Guest)

Nekesha Nash (Florida Department of Children and Families)

Megan Neel (Florida Department of Law Enforcement)

Elizabeth Nettles (Guest)

Casey Omeke (Florida Department of Health)

Dan Renaud (Florida Recovery Schools/Centro de la Esperanza)

Danielle Rice (FLHRC)

Kathleen Roberts (Guest)

Daniel Rocha (Florida Department of Health)

Melissa Salazar Cason (Rebel Recovery Jacksonville)

Vanessa Salmo (Guest)

Tim Santamour (Florida Harm Reduction Collective)

Dr. Marc Schlosser (Guest)

Melissa Schuster (Guest)

Parnia Roghani Shareef

Anna Simmons (Florida Department of Health)

Guillermo Tremols (Florida Harm Reduction Collective)

Amy Vanness (Florida Department of Corrections)

Stuart Waldo (Florida Department of Health)

Frank Whiting (Guest)

Jennifer Williams (Florida Department of Children and Families)

#### **Opening Remarks**

Melissa Jordan, MS, MPH, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Health with the Florida Department of Health, provided an overview of the meeting agenda and the presentations to follow.

Red Ribbon Week is October 23-31, 2023. The campaign symbolizes a commitment to raising awareness about the consequences of drug abuse. Also in October is National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day (October 28). This event aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the public about the potential for abuse of medications.

Ms. Jordan spoke about the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) Grant which assists local communities in the fight against all-drug overdose and opioid abuse. In August 2023, the Department of Health State Health Office

and the Broward, Duval, and Palm Beach County health departments completed the first iteration of the OD2A grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This four-year grant provided \$58.8 million for surveillance strategies to improve the collection and timely dissemination of actionable overdose data, and prevention tactics implemented at the local level that are informed by more timely data streams.

During year four of the grant, the State Health Office maintained allocations of \$2.2 million in mini-grants to 14 counties, as well as allocated \$1.2 million to six additional counties to assist local communities experiencing high impacts from the overdose epidemic. All 20 counties received funding to accomplish core surveillance and prevention activities of OD2A. Activities included: support for awareness campaigns to highlight the risks of substance use disorder and enhancements to surveillance systems and data collection efforts to assist with monitoring overdose trends, understanding which populations are most at risk to prioritize resources, and evaluating ways to distribute resources.

Five counties also received continuous funding to implement evidence-based curriculums in public schools (Brevard, Manatee, Nassau, Pasco, and Sarasota) and efforts increased to three counties receiving funding to support community paramedicine projects to improve patient follow-up among individuals most at risk of overdosing: Clay, Marion, and now Escambia. The State Health Office and Broward, Duval, and Palm Beach County health departments were awarded funding for the new iteration of the CDC grant, OD2A-States and OD2A-LOCAL in September 2023.

This new iteration, initially funded for \$5.8 million (and expected to continue for 5 years) has a greater focus on surveillance, allowing for continued evidenced-based prevention efforts at the local levels throughout Florida.

#### **Business**

- 1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 24, 2023:
  - **a.** A motion was entered to approve the meeting minutes. Motion carried, all in favor. Minutes were approved with no opposition.

## 2. Presentations:

a. SHIP Mental Well-being and Substance Abuse Prevention PAW – Jennifer Johnson, MPH, Senior Director of Public Policy, The Florida Behavioral Health Association

Ms. Johnson provided an overview and status of Year 1 of the Florida State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Mental Well-being and Substance Abuse Prevention Priority Area Workgroup (PAW). The goal of the Mental Well-being and Substance Abuse Prevention PAW is to reduce substance use disorders and drug overdose deaths. Objectives include: Reducing inhaled nicotine prevalence in youth; Reducing inhaled nicotine prevalence in adults; Increasing the percentage of pregnant women who have been screened and/or received brief intervention for alcohol and/or substance abuse; Reducing the rate of deaths caused by opioid overdose; Increasing the number of substance use data systems that integrate data from multiple stakeholder agencies; Increasing the number of formal addiction stabilization centers statewide (CORe).

**b.** Dangers of Social Media Use in Promoting Access to Illicit Drugs – Mike Duffey, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Mr. Duffey explained the increasing and ever-changing challenges facing law enforcement and families as people are more connected with social media apps and advancing technology. An overview was provided regarding how device location services enable drug dealers to connect with people in their area. Mr. Duffey also explained the use of vanishing messages, emoji drug codes, and hashtags to

help drug purchasers hide transactions from parental guidance. Mr. Duffey encouraged attendees to know family members' device passcodes and to research parental control applications to provide an extra layer of protection for their children.

# 3. 2023 Annual Report Discussion:

Melissa Jordan asked DPAC members to consider/evaluate each recommendation from the 2022 Annual Report to finalize the 2023 Annual Report.

- **a. Recommendation 1:** After discussion with the council, it was decided to update Recommendation 1 for the 2023 Annual Report. Jennifer Johnson with the Florida Behavioral Health Association will provide an update in writing to the Department.
- **b.** Recommendation 2: After discussion with the council, Recommendation 2 will be combined with Recommendation 1. Jennifer Johnson with the Florida Behavioral Health Association will provide an update in writing to the Department.
- **c. Recommendation 3:** After discussion with the council, it was decided to keep Recommendation 3 as is for the 2023 Annual Report.
- **d.** Recommendation 4: After discussion with the council, it was decided to keep Recommendation 4 as is for the 2023 Annual Report.
- **e. Recommendation 5:** After discussion with the council, it was decided to remove Recommendation 5 from the 2023 Annual Report. Future discussion on stigma reduction campaigns is needed.
- f. Recommendation 6: After discussion with the council, it was decided that much has been accomplished with partnerships with pharmacies to educate consumers on safe medication storage and disposal procedures when filing prescriptions for controlled substances, and Recommendation 6 should be removed from the 2023 Annual Report.
- g. Recommendation 7: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 7 has been completed and should be removed from the 2023 Annual Report. A future presentation from the Florida Department of Health regarding compliance and oversight of medical marijuana was requested.
- h. Recommendation 8: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 8 has made some advancements but will remain in the 2023 Annual Report. Doug Simon with the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget will provide a written update.
- i. Recommendation 9: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 9 will remain in the 2023 Annual Report. Jeffrey Cece with the Florida Department of Children and Families will provide a written update.
- j. Recommendation 10: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 10 will remain in the 2023 Annual Report. Jennifer Johnson with the Florida Behavioral Health Association will provide a written update.
- **k. Recommendation 11:** After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 11 will remain in the 2023 Annual Report. Jennifer Johnson with the Florida Behavioral Health Association will provide a written update.

- I. Recommendation 12: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 12 will be removed from the 2023 Annual Report since much has been accomplished with MAT. Dr. Jesseka Forbes with the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration will provide a written update on AHCA's work on this subject.
- **m.** Recommendation 13: After discussion with the council, it was decided to keep Recommendation 13 as is for the 2023 Annual Report.
- n. Recommendation 14: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 14 will remain in the 2023 Annual Report. Jeffrey Cece with the Florida Department of Children and Families will provide a written update.
- **o. Recommendation 15:** After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 15 has been completed and should be removed from the 2023 Annual Report.
- p. Recommendation 16: After discussion with the council, it was decided Recommendation 16 will remain in the 2023 Annual Report. Jeffrey Cece with the Florida Department of Children and Families will provide a written update.

## 4. Agency and Member Updates:

## Joe Spataro, Office of the Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General had no additional updates for DPAC.

## John McClellan, Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement updated the DPAC that the State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication (S.A.F.E.) in Florida program is up and running.

#### Jeffrey Cece, Department of Children and Families

The Department of Children and Families will provide written updates to council staff.

#### Maggie Agerton, Department of Corrections

The Florida Department of Corrections had no additional updates for DPAC.

#### Tracy Shelby, Department of Juvenile Justice

The Department of Juvenile Justice had no additional updates for DPAC.

## **Timothy Hay, Department of Education**

The Department of Education had no additional updates for DPAC.

#### Captain Derrick Rahming, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles provided an update on Operation Safe Highways. A recent operation in Indian River, St Lucie, and Martin counties resulted in 80 misdemeanor charges, 84 felony charges, four fugitive warrants, 23 drug charges, and five firearm charges. 16.2 grams of fentanyl (over eight thousand lethal doses), 346.36 grams of cocaine, 582.4 grams of methamphetamine, 595.3 grams of marijuana, and five guns were seized (total assets seized = \$166,629.54).

#### Captain Robert P. Bales, Department of Military Affairs

The Florida Department of Military Affairs had no additional updates for DPAC.

#### Melanie Brown-Woofter, Florida Behavioral Health Association

The Florida Behavioral Health Association had no additional updates for DPAC.

## Doug Simon, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

The Governor's Office of Policy and Budget had no additional updates for DPAC.

## Sheriff Peyton Grinnell, Lake County Sheriff's Office

Lake County Sheriff's Office had no additional updates for DPAC.

# Rabbi Meir Kessler, Jewish Recovery Center and Caron Renaissance

The Jewish Recovery Center and Caron Renaissance had no additional updates for DPAC.

# Dean Inserra, City Church Tallahassee

City Church Tallahassee had no additional updates for DPAC.

# Sheriff Chad Chronister, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office had no additional updates for DPAC.

## Sheriff Chris Nocco, Pasco Sheriff's Office

Pasco Sheriff's Office had no additional updates for DPAC. Sheriff Nocco asked the council if any state universities are conducting research to identify receptors that cause pain and how to better treat people who could be predisposed to drug abuse with alternate care options.

#### Nicholas Carper, The Florida Senate

The Florida Senate had no additional updates for DPAC.

# Aaron Gerson, 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

The 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court of Florida had no additional updates for DPAC.

## Jesseka Forbes, Agency for Health Care Administrative

The Agency for Health Care Administration had no additional updates for DPAC.

# **Peggy Sapp, Informed Families**

Informed Families presented a video and overview of the Red Ribbon Campaign running October 23–31, 2023.

#### 5. Public Comments/Open Discussion:

Tim Santamour requested the council make the recommendation to expand access to syringe services programs in Florida and for the allowance of state, municipal, and county funds to be used for such programs.

Maureen Kielian mentioned the need for changes in background checks for employment, having OIR and people with lived experiences appointed to the council, additional discussion regarding the dangers of accidental overdoses within the senior population, and more focus on addiction and mental health treatment.

Dan Renaud, founder and executive director of Florida Recovery Schools, would like to hear more about adolescent substance use in future meetings and voiced concern regarding the concentration levels in Delta 8 and Delta 9 products as they are legally available and easily accessible to children. He mentioned an article from the FDA and the CDC showing delivery items for those products which look like school supplies and candy dispensers. Mr. Renaud also noted his opposition to medical marijuana cards being prescribed to teenagers.

Shelby Meaders recommended adding seats to the DPAC to include research institutions and colleges, the recovery community, and harm reduction organizations.

# 6. Adjournment:

For closing items, Ms. Jordan reminded DPAC members that the DPAC operates in the Sunshine Law and members should not discuss DPAC business with other members outside of meetings.

The date for the next DPAC meeting is planned for January 2023. Additional details and a confirmed date will be shared when it is available.

A motion was entered to adjourn. The motion was carried with no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

# STATE ASSISTANCE FOR FENTANYL ERADICATION (SAFE)



Deputy Commissioner Vaden "Shane" Pollard Florida Department of Law Enforcement

# STATE ASSISTANCE FOR FENTANYL ERADICATION



- The State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication (SAFE) program was established in 2023 by the Florida Legislature.
- This program provides \$20 million dollars of funding for law enforcement across Florida to conduct investigations designed to combat illegal fentanyl activity.
- This program provides law enforcement agencies reimbursement for approved fentanyl-related investigative operations, which may include:
  - Overtime
  - Relevant Travel Costs
  - Purchasing of Investigative Supplies and Equipment
  - Relevant Contracted Services
  - Training Costs
  - Other Costs Associated with Cases Focusing on Fentanyl Eradication



# Funding Awards as of February 2024

- Over \$8.2 million of this funding has been awarded to law enforcement in Florida.
- Currently there are 69 approved cases from 49 agencies (some agencies have multiple cases).
- Expenditures vary for each investigation but can range from overtime, surveillance equipment to translation services.



# **Stats as of February 2024**

- 59 Arrests.
- Approximately 20 kilos of fentanyl seized.
- Approximately 12,000 fentanyl pills seized.
- 17 kilos of a variety of other illegal drugs and multiple firearms seized.
- Numerous fentanyl related overdose deaths are also being investigated as a result of several of these open investigations.



According to the 2022 Annual Drug Identified in Deceased Persons Report:

- Florida's drug-related deaths decreased by 3 percent for the 2022 year.
- The occurrence of fentanyl, and death caused by fentanyl, decreased by 3 percent, while the occurrence of fentanyl analogs in decedents increased by 40 percent.
- Fentanyl remained the most frequently occurring drug identified in decedents and most frequent drug found to have caused the death of most decedents.



Governor DeSantis requested the continuation of this program with an increased budget of \$25 million in his budget recommendations for fiscal year 2024-2025.

With approval from the Florida Legislature, this program will continue to help Florida's fight against fentanyl.

For questions on applying for this funding, please reach out to <a href="mailto:OPBFunding@fdle.state.fl.us">OPBFunding@fdle.state.fl.us</a>.

Jennifer Miller, Bureau Chief
(850) 688-8956



# FLORIDA RECEVERY schools

# MEET THE STAFF

# DAN RENAUD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/FOUNDER

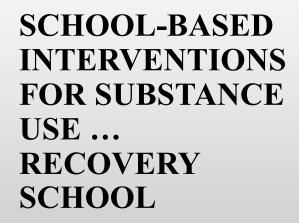


Dan Renaud BS, CAP, ICADC Addiction counselor and person in long-term recovery - over 30 years.

He has served on panels, and given lectures at colleges, and schools. and given seminars on addictions. His specialty is adolescent treatment and family crisis intervention, utilizing various individual and group therapy modalities.

Currently, he is a counselor in Private Practice Jacksonville FL.

Founder and Executive Director of Florida Recovery Schools (Recovery High School). Co-chair Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee for Judicial District 4. Member multidisciplinary team Adolescent Drug Court (Duval Co) Co-Facilitator Duval County Public Schools "Nighttime Substance Abuse Program". Currently serves on the Boards of Gateway Community Services the Northeast Florida Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse.





# SUBSTANCE USE: A BARRIER TO LEARNING

CRITICAL ADOLESCENT HEALTH BEHAVIORS

Risk and Protective Factors **Domains** 

**Alcohol and Drug Use** 

Injury and Violence, including suicide

Tobacco Use

**Nutrition** 

**Physical Activity** 

**Sexual Risk Behaviors** 

CDC

Community

Family

School

•Individual/Peer

**Hawkins and Catalano** 

Change in Decrease in emotional and Loss of Loss of Change in social short-term behaviors physical wellconcentration motivation memory being Feelings of Change of Change of Change in Drop in grades friends behavior paranoia appearance Signs of depression

# EXAMPLES OF SYMPTOMS OF ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE MISUSE

# PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

**Identify Barriers** 

Drug specific information

Signs & symptoms of Substance use & addiction

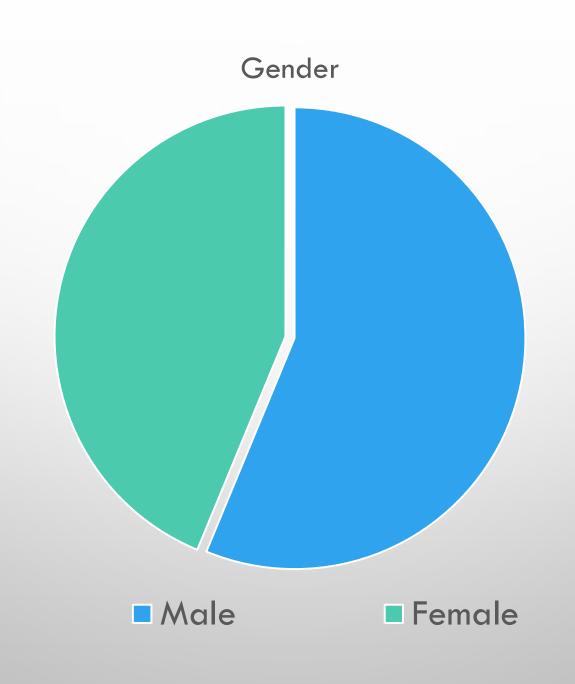
Communication skills

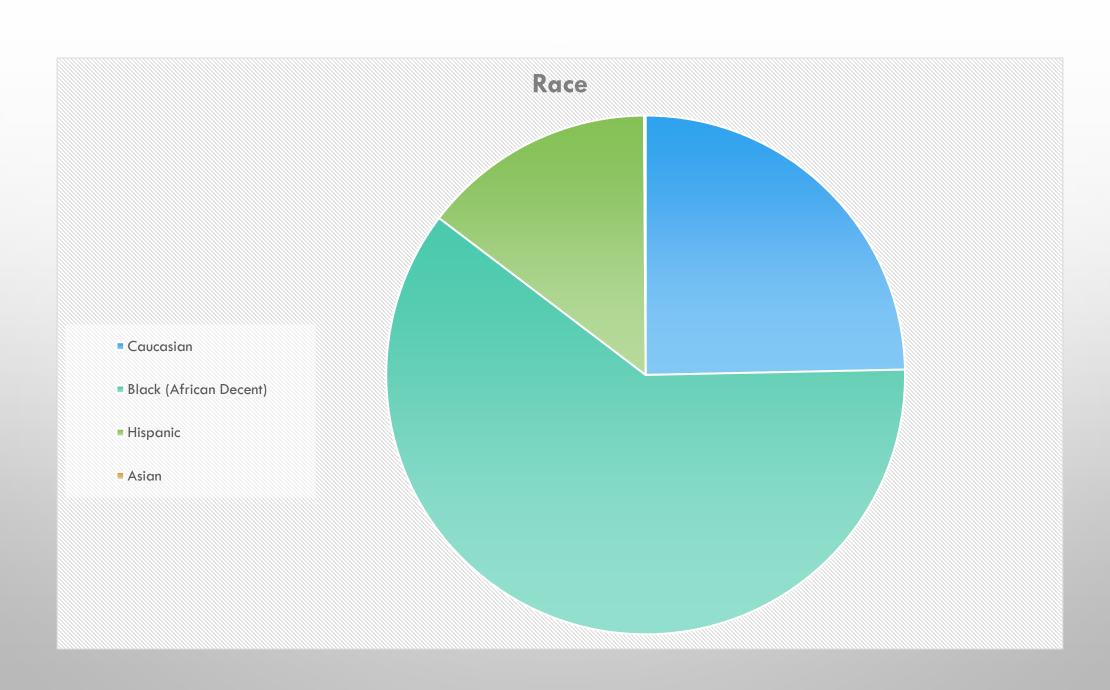
Positive alternatives

Community resources

Responsibility for one's behavior

Graduation





# TREATMENT WORKS, BUT....

It is available to less than 10% of those in need

75% of all teens relapse after leaving treatment

47% of all students returning to traditional high schools resume full-blown drug use within one year

The first 60 days are the greatest time of risk for each level of relapse, suggesting the need for intense post-treatment services during this time.

Peer connection and interaction are critical

Schools provide the main, system of peer interaction and support for adolescents and young adults

School sits at the heart of the threat of relapse and other unhealthy and maladaptive behaviors for these students.



# WHAT IS A RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOL?

# Traditional public school

- Grades 7-12
- Same diploma as other high schools

Recovery program

- Group and individual counseling
- Group activities
- Drug testing
- Integrated with academic program

# **ENROLLMENT**

# Who is eligible to attend?

- Any student 14 to 19
- Desire to Stay abstinent
- Wanting to finish school

# Sources of students

- Duval Co School
- Dept. of Juvenile Justice
- Treatment Centers and Individual providers
- Family Members
- Self referral

# Screening

- Various tools
- Team interview
- Aftercare Model

# BY THE NUMBERS



Began accepting students
November 1,
2016.



To date we have worked with over 1000 students., Current enrollment is 64.



Average length of stay is 150 days.



Total program cost to date is \$64.28 per student per school day or 6,004.54 per year



Current success rate is 68.2% decrease in Substance Use across all students attended



70.1

positive
outcomes
Clean Drug Screen
•64%
Activity Academic

**Additional** 



We have 27 students that have graduated so far this year

# CODE OF CONDUCT



Restorative Justice



12 Step Integration



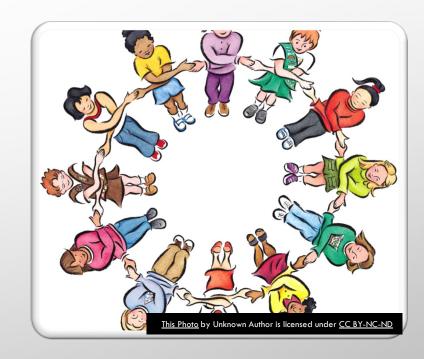
Harm Reduction



Integrated

# APG ALTERNATIVE PEER GROUP

- RIVER OAK CENTER ALTERNATIVE PEER GROUP TEACHES STUDENTS BASIC LIFE SKILLS TO PREPARE THEM FOR LIFE EXPERIENCES, THE PRESSURE OF FULFILLING THEIR GOALS, MEETING EXPECTATIONS, AND BEING PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS IN AN E-COMPETITIVE WORLD.
- OUR GOAL IS TO TEACH A FUN RICH CURRICULUM THAT WILL KEEP YOUNG ADULTS ENGAGED, THE OPPORTUNITY TO SELF-ASSESS, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY PREVENT THEM FROM MAKING TOXIC DECISIONS THAT WILL LEAD THEM DOWN A DESTRUCTIVE PATH.
- ALTERNATIVE PEER GROUP IS ESPECIALLY SUITED FOR YOUNG ADULTS WHO STRUGGLE WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH.
- THE PROGRAM FOCUSES ON FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION, PEER SUPPORT, AND PROFESSIONALLY STAFFED COUNSELING AND CASE MANAGEMENT.



# A TYPICAL DAY



# New Hope Education and Addiction Services, Inc.



2/29/2024

The Case for Recovery High Schools

Introduction:

Recovery high schools are specialized educational institutions designed to address the unique needs of students struggling with substance abuse and addiction. These schools provide a supportive and recovery-focused environment that can significantly benefit students in their journey toward sobriety and academic success. This position paper outlines the case for the establishment and support of recovery high schools.

#### I. Substance Abuse Epidemic:

The United States is facing a severe substance abuse epidemic, particularly among adolescents. The opioid crisis has claimed countless lives, and young people are particularly vulnerable. Recovery high schools play a critical role in addressing this crisis by providing a safe and nurturing environment for students to overcome addiction.

#### II. Holistic Approach to Recovery:

Recovery high schools offer a holistic approach to recovery by combining academics with comprehensive addiction support services. This includes counseling, peer support, and access to recovery resources. Such an approach addresses the root causes of addiction while ensuring students do not fall behind academically.

#### III. Academic Success:

Recovery high schools have demonstrated their effectiveness in improving academic outcomes for students in recovery. By offering a structured and supportive learning environment, these schools help students regain their focus on education and achieve their academic potential.

#### IV. Peer Support and Community:

One of the key strengths of recovery high schools is the sense of community and peer support they foster. Students in recovery often struggle with isolation and stigma. These schools provide a sense of

belonging, reducing the risk of relapse and encouraging long-term recovery.

#### V. Relapse Prevention:

Recovery high schools equip students with coping skills and relapse prevention strategies. This education is invaluable in helping students maintain sobriety beyond their time in school, contributing to healthier lives and communities.

# VI. Cost Savings:

# New Hope Education and Addiction Services, Inc.



Investing in recovery high schools can lead to long-term cost savings. Preventing substance abuse and addiction among young people reduces the burden on the healthcare system, criminal justice system, and social services, ultimately saving taxpayer dollars.

VII. Evidence-Based Success:

Numerous studies and real-world examples have demonstrated the positive impact of recovery in high schools. Evidence-based practices, such as those employed in these schools, should be promoted and expanded to serve a wider population.

VIII. Accessible and Inclusive:

Efforts should be made to ensure that recovery high schools are accessible to all who need them, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location. Expanding the reach of these schools will help more students on the path to recovery.

IX. Legislative and Financial Support:

To realize the full potential of recovery high schools, legislative and financial support at the federal, state, and local levels is essential. This includes funding for the establishment and maintenance of these schools and the integration of addiction support services into existing educational systems.

### Conclusion:

Recovery high schools offer a lifeline to students struggling with addiction, providing them with the tools, support, and education they need to overcome their challenges. The evidence overwhelmingly supports their effectiveness in promoting recovery and academic success. We must invest in and expand these institutions to combat the substance abuse epidemic and ensure a brighter future for our youth.

Dan Renaud, Founder and Director

New Hope Education and Addiction Services, Inc

Sincerely,

Dan Renaud, Executive Director

Leva-d

New Hope Education and Addiction Services, DBA Florida Recovery School, and Centro de la Esperanza

# **Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Overview**

The **Statewide Drug Policy Advisory Council Overview (DPAC)** is authorized under <u>section</u> <u>397.333</u>, Florida Statutes, to provide analysis of the substance abuse problems in the state and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for developing and implementing a state drug control strategy.

The DPAC comprises 19 members (or their designees), including the Florida Attorney General, Executive Director of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Secretary of the Department of Children and Families, Director of the Office of Policy and Budget, Secretary of Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Commissioner of Education, Executive Director of Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, and the Adjunct General of the Department of Military Affairs., DPAC also includes an additional member appointed by the Governor, and one member appointed each by the Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, and Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court. The State Surgeon General sits as the DPAC Chair.

The DPAC is required to submit an annual report to the Governor, Speaker of the House, and President of the Senate by December 1 of each year.

The DPAC is also responsible for:

- Reviewing various substance abuse programs and recommending measures that are sufficient to determine program outcomes.
- Reviewing the drug control strategies and programs of other states and the federal government and compiling the relevant research
- Recommending changes in the law that would remove barriers to or enhance the implementation of the state drug control strategy and make recommendations on the need for public information campaigns to be conducted in the state to limit substance abuse.
- Ensuring that there is a coordinated, integrated, and multidisciplinary response to the substance abuse problem in Florida.
- Assisting communities and families in pooling their knowledge and experiences related to the problems of substance abuse.
- Examining the extent to which all state programs that involve substance abuse treatment include a meaningful work component and identify any change in the law that would remove barriers to or enhance the work component of a substance abuse treatment program.
- Recommending to the Governor and the Legislature ways to expand and fund drug courts in Florida.

In addition, the chair of the advisory council shall appoint workgroups that include members of state agencies that are not represented on the DPAC and shall solicit input and recommendations from those state agencies.